

THE CIRCULAR.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.]

DEVOTED TO THE SOVEREIGNTY OF JESUS CHRIST.

[EDITED BY J. H. NOYES.]

VOL. I.

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TERMS AND MEANS.

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A Christian Nation.—No. 2.

There is a strong prejudice in this country against the 'Union of Church and State,' which may be offended at our project of a Christian Nation. We apprehend, however, that a clear view of what we propose, with true definitions of the terms, *Church and State*, will show that there is no occasion for such offense.

1. If by the term 'Union of Church and State,' is meant a union of the State with some existing visible ecclesiastical organization—some one of the many sects, who hold the Bible in common, and dispute about the interpretation of it—we have proposed no such union, but have expressly disclaimed it. The constitutional changes which we suggested, would indeed unite the State with religion, but not with a church, which is but a human vehicle of religion, entirely distinct from it. Our plan of annexation might be called a 'union of the kingdom of God and State,' or a 'union of the Bible and State,' but not a 'union of Church and State.' The distinction may be made clear by recurring to an individual example. Suppose an irreligious man has imbibed a strong prejudice against joining any visible church.—We might, in perfect consistency with any principles that we hold, urge him to become religious, to submit his spirit to God, to believe and confess Jesus Christ, to adopt the Bible as his spiritual counselor, and yet say to him, 'You need not join any church; all we advise you to do, may be done between yourself and God, without entangling you in any human organization.' Instead of urging the State to join itself to any church, (except of course 'the church of the first-born' within the veil,) we should be very willing that its constitution should forever prohibit its annexation to any separate visible ecclesiastical organization.

2. If by the terms 'Union of Church and State,' is meant a union of the State with religion, in any form, then the prejudice against such a union has already occasion to be alarmed. Very few, if any, of the States wholly abstain from connection of government with religion. Chaplaincies, Fast and Thanksgiving proclamations, oaths, and many other religious elements, are admitted into State organizations and usages. Several of the States order by law, that the Bible shall be read in their common schools. This may be regarded as the germ of all we propose. It as truly involves a 'union of church and State,' as would the adoption of the Bible into the Constitution. It has been decided by high judicial authority in some States that any law which militates with the law of God, is null and void. This again involves the principle of Theocracy, and is a union of 'religion and State,' though not of 'church and State.' We see no valid reason why a State that has gone thus far, may not go farther, and make its religious acts entirely legitimate (as they are not at present) by openly professing subjection to God, and adopting the Bible as the basis of its constitution and legislation.

3. The prejudice against the 'union of church and State' which exists in this country, had its

origin in the oppressions which our forefathers suffered from prelacy, united with the British government. That was and is a proper 'union of church and State.' Two distinct organizations, one ecclesiastical and the other political, are united in the British Constitution. The English church has a creed, priesthood, organization, and even judiciary, separate from the State. The State is not married to religion, but to a machine that is supposed to manufacture religion. Its union is not with God or his kingdom, but with a body of ecclesiastics who are supposed to be the representatives of God. The religious element of its Constitution is not the Bible, but the 'thirty-nine articles.' It is in the nature of such a union, that either the church should be the tool of the State and an engine of political oppression, or that the State should be the tool of the church and an engine of sectarian oppression. Our fathers reasonably hated this union. But their hatred did not extend to a union of religion and State. This is evident from the fact that the political institutions which they founded in this country were semi-religious. The first government of the New-Haven colony was avowedly a Theocracy. If the people of this country have confounded the idea of religion with that of a church, and have thus come to abhor a union not only of 'church and State,' but of religion and State, they have forsaken the views of their fathers—their prejudice has so enlarged itself, that it is not sanctioned by the example of those from whom it descended.

4. It is not to be denied that an individual in becoming religious, is liable to fall into sectarianism and bigotry. The affections which religion awakens, and the attachments which it occasions, are peculiarly deep and strong; and when they are not regulated by sound judgment, they produce distortion of character, and lead to illiberal habits. But is this a good reason for not urging a man to become religious, or for dissuading him from it? Is there not a greater liability to evil, on the other hand, from his remaining irreligious; and of the two dangers, ought we not to choose the least? We may caution him against the danger of illiberality, and we may put him in the way to avoid it, by advising him to hold himself aloof from all sectarian organizations. But this should not hinder us from urging him to submit his heart to God. The reader may apply all this to a State, as well as to an individual.

5. If the prejudice against the 'union of church and State,' is really a prejudice against the union of religion and State, we are bound by our allegiance to God to denounce it as a foolish, wicked, and mischievous device of the devil to hinder the kingdoms of this world from becoming the kingdoms of Jesus Christ. God has as good right to rule nations as individuals; and every obligation to acknowledge his sovereignty which presses on men as private persons, presses with equal weight on them in every associate capacity. To say that the people of a State ought to be religious, but the State itself ought to have no religion, is as if a householder should advise each member of his family to be religious, but should insist that he as the head of the family, and the family itself, should have no religion; or as if a merchant should resolve to be religious at home, and in church meetings, but never to carry his religion into his store and out-door business.

One thing is certain, viz: any nation that has such a prejudice against the 'union of church and State,' that it cannot annex itself to the kingdom of God by the course we have pointed out, or by some equivalent course, WILL BE DESTROYED. The Almighty has appointed Jesus Christ the political as well as spiritual head of all nations. His kingdom, by the sure word of prophecy, is to succeed and

take the place of the Gentile monarchies, represented by Nebuchadnezzar's image. He has already commenced his reign over the human race, and will surely wield the iron rod which dashed in pieces the Jewish and Roman kingdoms, till the whole world shall be subdued under him. Certain and utter ruin, then, is before this nation and every State in it, and every other nation that is too fond of freedom, or too fearful of a 'union of church and State,' to give Jesus Christ its throne.

FOR THE CIRCULAR.

Bible History.

I have been unusually interested of late in the study of the Old Testament Scripture, particularly the record of God's dealings with his people. It is said that some, at least, of these things happened for ensamples, and were written for our admonition, and they are certainly very instructive. The history of the Jews, though it brings out the stiff-neckedness and rebellion of that chosen people, has also its many instances of heroism, through confidence in God. The extremes of faith and unbelief, and their consequences, are distinctly marked, and profitable for reflection. The jealous care with which God watched over them while leading them out from Egyptian oppression—the unqualified trust which he required them to repose in him—the extreme jealousy and displeasure with which he regarded every deviation toward other gods, shine out like beacon lights in our path. Witness their first arrival on the borders of the promised land; the spies are sent out, one from each tribe, and after a patient search return, and with perfect unanimity pronounce the land all they could desire, a land flowing with milk and honey. Ten of them, taking a perfectly correct natural view of all that they had seen, declare the project of taking possession of this land, swarming with a dense and warlike people, in the fortified possession of it, and its walled cities, as utterly impossible. But two of the twelve, taking a correct spiritual view of things, regard the promise of God, 'I have given them into thy hand,' as greater than a swarming population—than fenced cities, or even than the giants, the sons of Anak. To the ten, in comparison with the inhabitants, themselves were as grasshoppers. To the two, in comparison with the promise of God, these people of the land were as grasshoppers. But the people leaned to the natural view, and hearkened unto the ten; and inasmuch as they thus left God out of their knowledge, God left them to be overthrown of their enemies, and to perish in the wilderness.

When, after a discipline of forty years of weary wandering in the wilderness, they again emerged in view of their inheritance, and even after they had won the first great battle, which was precipitated upon them by Sihon and Og, it required much exhortation to raise them above their natural fears. The encouragement is oft repeated, 'Be strong and of good courage.' 'Be very courageous.' 'Fear them not.' And as a basis for their courage, God continually proclaimed this truth in varied language unto them: 'I am among you a mighty God and a terrible; I will destroy your enemies.' The recognition of this truth seems to be considered as all-important, the 'one thing needful,' which God would have planted deep in the heart of the whole nation. This fact is worthy of consideration.

Again, the evidence which was adduced to prove this fact, is another point of interest. They were continually exhorted to look back and see what God had done for them; his miracles in Egypt; his great deliverance at the Red sea; and the overthrow of Sihon and Og; their guidance and miraculous sustenance thro'

all their wanderings: these things were urged as proof that God was among them, and though his presence was not perceptible to the natural eye, yet these evidences of his power and will, beaming out from time to time, were not to be forgotten or despised. His displeasure was hot against all such forgetfulness. And it was with mingled threatenings and assurances like these, (and it required them all,) that these people were urged up against the nations of Canaan—greater and mightier than they. No disparity of force or circumstances was allowed to have any weight, or be any hindrance. 'God with them' was to overbalance all excess of numbers, or advantage of position, and to overrule all fear.

As we trace their history, we see that when God transferred the authority from Moses to Joshua, he did so by exalting Joshua in the sight of the people, as he had Moses in the beginning. This public evidence of his approbation, was Joshua's commission in all after time—he was approved of God. When, again, they encompassed the first city in the land, the walls thereof were thrown down by the power of God, without any effort of theirs other than an act of recognition of him. By this display of his power, God again exalted himself in the eyes of the very men who were to conquer the land, thus establishing the proof of his presence, and encouraging them to feats of the greatest daring. Notwithstanding, at Ai they met with a reverse, and with the usual treachery of the natural heart, they reproached God; and magnifying the dangers which surrounded them, wished themselves back on the other side Jordan. Here again God's jealousy blazed out. He showed them that there was a spirit in the camp which did not recognize him, an evil eye which looked wishfully towards private gain, in disregard of the public good. But e'er the leaven had time to work, by the direction of God the offender was searched out, and the proof of his guilt revealed, and he and all that was his destroyed: and then, again, Israel was victorious.

Another important thought which this history suggests, is the care which God took to have all the gods of the nations of Canaan destroyed, and every trace of them or their worship blotted out from the land. The burden of the whole law which he gave his people, was, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' On this, and the like of it, hung all the law; and hence directions to have them utterly destroyed were often repeated; and implicit obedience to the directions received the approval of God, and disobedience or neglect was severely rebuked and punished. And in the prosecution of the work the command was, 'Let not thine eye pity or thy hand spare.' The reason assigned for this severity, was, the danger of their being drawn away by the influence of visible gods, to forget and forsake the invisible and true, in whom was their salvation. And the event shows that the danger was not magnified. Had the Jews recognized God continually as a God among them, they would have been obedient to his law, and he would have put all their enemies under their feet. It is this putting him afar off, and allowing things visible to become, as it were, a wall around them, shutting God without, which makes men indifferent to his service. If they can only keep things visible far enough off to encompass God within, the consciousness of his presence will make obedience to him a pleasure. But the generations of Israel who saw not God's mighty works were prone to forget him, and were in turn forsaken of him and given up at times to serve dumb idols, and idolatrous nations. Now we, though we wrestle not against flesh and blood, like them, may profit by their example; for now, as then, God is a very present God.

H. N. L.

Verona, N. Y., April, 1852.

Cheer up.

BY MARTIN F. TUPPER.

Never go gloomily, man with a mind,
Hope is a better companion than fear,
Providence ever benignant and kind,
Gives with a smile what you take with a tear;
All will be right,
Look to the light,—
Morning is ever the daughter of night,
All that is black will be all that is bright,
Cheerily, cheerily then! cheer up!

Many a foe is a friend in disguise,
Many a sorrow a blessing most true,
Teaching the heart to be happy and wise,
With love ever precious and joy ever new.
Stand in the van!
Strive like a man!
This is the bravest and cleverest plan,
Trusting in God while you do what you can,
Cheerily, cheerily then! cheer up!

THE CIRCULAR.

BROOKLYN, APRIL 13, 1852.

A Foolish Imposition.

The reader will remember an item in our paper a few weeks ago, relating to Cooley, who published a partial edition of the 'Bible Argument' at Worcester, in 1850, and whose peddling agent was abused at Putney as being an 'emissary of Noyes.' A young man at Syracuse, N. Y., has lately tried the same trick. Another edition (making the third in all) of that famous Argument has appeared, ostensibly published by a man, of whom we know nothing, except that he takes our paper, and that he visited the Oneida Community with his wife, in a friendly way, a year or two ago. The real editor, however, is a notorious apostate Perfectionist, originally a pupil of John Van Epps, now figuring in Syracuse as a mushroom Doctor, Professor, and Swedenborgian. We call the publication an imposition, because it professes in glaring characters on its title page to be a 'Disclosure,' while in fact the very treatise which it parades before the public, and which alone gives it interest, was first published by the Oneida Association four years ago, and has since been published by Cooley in Massachusetts, and extensively circulated, as this pamphlet itself informs us.

These repeated piracies, fairly require us, as conservatives, to publish a new edition of the Bible Argument; and we hereby announce that the fourth Annual Report of the Oneida Association, now in course of preparation, will contain that argument, revised and enlarged; together with a full historical sketch of the community, and an exposition of the religious theory on which its Social Theory is based. We shall make this publication as comprehensive an answer as possible, to the inquiries which are flowing in upon us from all quarters, respecting the Oneida Community.

Misdirections.

Our friends at Oneida a few days since saw a notice, in a neighboring paper, of letters remaining in the Post Office at Lenox for the Community. Now Lenox is a large town containing several villages and post offices, and the Community lives on the extreme south-eastern border of it, nearer to Oneida Castle than any other village, and distant some five or six miles from Lenox post office. They have therefore always requested correspondents to address them at Oneida Castle, or at Oneida Depot, and have never thought of finding letters any where else. On seeing the notice, they sent a messenger to Lenox, who found eighteen letters, most of them dated in February, and earnestly and respectfully requesting documents and information about the Oneida Community.—Some of them are from editors, and one from a member of Congress. The whole country, from Mobile to Boston seemed to have waked up suddenly to a lively interest in our affairs, and to have rushed to the Lenox post-office for information. The secret of the matter is simply this. The manifesto which the New York Observer published against us in February, described the Community as located in the town of Lenox, and this correspondence with its misdirection was the result. We regret the delay and seeming neglect which these inquirers have met with, and will endeavor to answer their requests now, as far and as soon as possible.

Marriage and Divorce.

There is much ferment and discussion at the present time, on the subject of divorce. The popular mind as expressed in newspapers and in legislation, is in favor of enlarging the freedom of divorce. A bill is now before the legislature of New York, and likely to pass, greatly extending the grounds on which application may be made, and increasing the facilities of separation between married parties.

In view of the many miseries and disasters to which marriage is liable, this popular attempt to alleviate the workings of the institution is not to be wondered at. When, as is shown to be the fact, marriage is a lottery in which there is almost an even chance to draw a blank, or worse than a blank, it is natural that persons should wish to fix the possibility of annulling their first luck, and drawing again.

We, however, do not sympathise with the movement for extending the privilege of divorce, considering it unscriptural, illogical, and practically bad. Marriage must be regarded in one of two ways: either as a Bible institution, founded on Divine Law, or as a human institution, founded in the wants and regulations of Society. In either case, the argument is clear against any such modification as the divorce laws propose.

1. Regarding marriage as strictly a divine appointment, founded on Bible authority, which is the view of religious conservatives, we are bound of course, to abide by the Bible law and interpretation of the subject. These explicitly forbid all divorce, except for one cause, viz., Adultery. Moses, 'for the hardness of the people's hearts,' allowed a greater range to the policy of divorce, during the administration of the law; but Christ came, restoring the marriage bond to all its original stringency. 'Who-soever,' he says, 'shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery.' His definition of adultery in another case, shows, if possible, a still more rigorous interpretation of marriage, making absolute exclusiveness of eye and heart the test of fidelity: 'He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her, already, in his heart.' The only variation from this strict view of marriage he any where recognises, is the final state in which marriage is to be wholly abolished. 'In the resurrection' he says, 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.' Here are two states: one, in which marriage exists as a valid institution; the other, in which it is done away. While it is in force, Christ insists that it shall be thoroughly carried out—it shall be binding in all its claims; there shall be no divorce. It is no part of his object to relieve men of the restrictions and tribulations of marriage, so long as that institution is necessary. On the contrary, he increased the stringency of the law by his interpretation, to such an extent, that his disciples said, 'if the case of a man be so with his wife it is not good to marry.' The only alternative which he offered was a state in which marriage should cease altogether.

Those therefore, who treat marriage as a Bible institution, and yet seek to introduce a relaxation of the code, allowing freedom of divorce, are inconsistent with themselves, and act, not only without authority, but directly against the policy of Christ. 2. It is fashionable nowadays to drop the religious view of this subject, and to regard marriage as mainly a civil institution, provided by the State for the convenience and welfare of society. In this view of the case, it is only a civil contract; and such, we believe, has been the decision in certain cases, by high judicial authority. If marriage is taken out of the Bible, and made subject to state legislation, it becomes a human ordinance, and must necessarily be regarded as nothing more than a contract between parties. As such, it is properly subject only to the same common law which regulates all civil contracts, and any special legislation in the matter is impertinent. Common law allows persons to enter into various contracts of partnership, and allows the purchase and sale of property on such terms as may be agreed to; and only interferes so far as to see that the contract which is made in any case is fairly carried out. If marriage is a human ordinance, of the nature of a contract, then it is a matter which should equally be left to the agreement of parties, and the law has properly no occasion to interfere any further than it does in other cases.

By the common law of contracts, parties would have a right to contract marriage for a limited time, or for permanence, according to mutual agreement; or they could dissolve the relation at any time by common consent: and no law of divorce would be required. All that the law could consistently do, would be to hold the contracting parties to the engagement they enter into. By the same rule also a person could marry more than one; and there is no more reason to prohibit it, considering marriage as a civil contract, than there would be to forbid a man to increase his real estate.

But it may be said that marriage, though a human ordinance, and founded on voluntary contract, still has certain conditions and contingencies attending it, which take it out of the common law of contracts, and make it require special legislation. The fact that the number of the sexes is about equal, is supposed to make a just foundation for the law that no man shall appropriate to himself more than one woman. But if this principle is allowed to rule in law, it will lead directly to *agrarianism*. If a man's right to two wives is denied on the ground that his excess leaves somebody else destitute, by the same principle we are bound to limit his right to property, and forbid him to acquire beyond a certain amount of that. The earth contains a fixed quantity of land, enough perhaps, for ten acres to each individual. The possession of more than that amount by any one person cuts off the share of somebody else, and, according to the marriage rule, should be prohibited. Society allows a man to amass a large estate, thereby impoverishing a certain number of other men;

and while the rich man's property is competent to support a dozen women with their children, and the poor man is not able to support one decently, the laws allot the same burden of support, if the parties marry, to both. Equity would seem to indicate, that the maintenance of women and children should fall just according to the balance of means; and if society allows the present unequal division of property, there is no reason why the laws should not allow such a natural distribution of the responsibilities of marriage as would correspond.

But there is reason to suppose that the sexes are not equal; and if they were, there are multitudes of one sex who are never married, and who have no chance to be; and if special legislation is to take charge of equity in the matter, and forbid more than one wife to one man, it should make the matter even by enacting that every man shall marry; and even then there would probably be a large balance of women excluded from marriage.

Security for the maintenance of children is urged as a reason for enacting the permanence of the marriage contract. But as an objection to the common-law view of marriage, it lies equally against the advocates of an enlarged liberty of divorce. They have to dispose of it in some way; and whatever regulations serve to secure the public against parentless children in cases of divorce, would also serve if marriage was treated like any other civil contract, i. e., left to the agreement of the parties. The instinct of parental affection is in general a powerful guarantee, first, of the permanence of marriage, and then of the support of children in case of its dissolution.

Our argument against the advocates of an easy divorce law is briefly this: If marriage is a divine institution, resting on the authority of the Bible, we must take the Bible as our guide; and that expressly forbids divorce, except for the cause of infidelity. If it is a human institution, then it is of the nature of a civil contract, and should be left to the common law of contracts without the interference of other legislation.

For our part we dissent from the position, both of those who claim marriage as a perpetual ordinance of God, and those who make it a matter of human convenience. We adhere to Christ's view of the matter: and should advise the world while they maintain marriage, to carry it out faithfully, and allow of no relaxation. At the same time, we should propose to them as he does, the coming *age* of the Sons of God when marriage shall pass away.

The New Party Platform.

The motto of our paper, represents the cause to which all true believers are committed—the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, in the individual, the family, and the world. This is the final platform; and vast as are the issues involved, it is the only one that is really satisfactory to the honest mind. It is a platform which will rally to itself in due time all the life of religion, patriotism, philanthropy and reform, throughout the world.

The convert to this platform asks for his work—How shall we forward our candidate, and procure his election? What can be done to introduce the universal sovereignty of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God? We must evidently begin with ourselves,—so believe and accept Christ that he shall take the throne of our hearts. Then we may extend his influence to those nearest to us, and submit our families to his name. A Christian is bound by the highest responsibility to rule his household for Christ; and as a loyal partizan, he will insist that all his interests and connections shall lead in the same direction. So far as ourselves and our families are concerned, we have an immediate vote to give, on the great issue before us.—

In respect to the world, there is also a work to do. Our candidate must be put forward and kept before the people, in a way that he shall become known to the world. This is all that is necessary to secure his election; a true knowledge of his spirit, character, and purpose, is eternal life. But to convey such a knowledge, requires time and patience, for there are many adversaries. On the one hand, all truth is electioneering for Christ—it is scattering in one way and another, favorable impressions of him; and on the other hand, the principality of unbelief is distilling continual darkness and misrepresentation of him. We must favor the operation of truth, wherever it is seen, not only in our immediate circle, but in all the movements and events of the day.

But principally, a knowledge of Christ will be diffused, and his cause will have triumphant progress, in the fact of the *unity* of his follow-

ers. This is the thing which Christ most relied on, for the popularity and success of his name; and it will prove in the end, the wisdom of his policy. He prayed for his disciples 'that they all might be one, that the world might know that he was sent of God;' and he said to them 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' Let it be understood that in kindling and circulating the spirit of unity among ourselves, we are most effectually preaching Christ. We are accumulating political capital for the party, faster than we could in any other way. The power of love and unity is stronger than that of isolation and selfishness; and if the former have a lodgment with us, their more growing and shining forth will magnetize the world. We believe the Oneida Community, by its name and the simple fact of its existence, has had a wide influence of this kind. We are ambitious that the paper should be an organ and exponent of the unity of Christ's prayer. However imperfect it may be in other respects if it goes forth charged with the spirit of unity—if it is sustained by the common interest and is a sincere expression of the whole body of believers, it will do its best work in the cause of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

Paul's Liberality.

If we consider Paul as Judas' successor in the apostleship, we shall see that he made proof of his ministry by a character the very reverse of him who fell. Paul says to the Corinthians, 'The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children;' and he carried out this principle as a father in the gospel, to the last extent. He not only took upon him the spiritual care of all the churches, but charged himself with their temporal interests. Instead of being burdensome to them, his own hands ministered to his necessities and to them that were with him, and he had a fatherly interest that they all should be provided for. His object as financier seemed to be to procure *equality*, that so none might lack—virtually establishing a system of community through the church. Witness his directions to Timothy concerning widows, and his laborious service to the poor saints at Jerusalem. The latter were probably the apostles and believing Jews, who were doubtless poor in this world, but able to make rich disbursements in faith, hope, and charity to the more wealthy Gentiles. It was a delightful office to Paul to carry to his nation the proof of the Gentile's love and unselfishness. He was pleased for three reasons. It gave him a chance to boast of the Gentiles; it supplied the wants of the saints; and was abundant by many thanksgivings unto God.

The spirit which Paul had cannot be so well expressed as in his own words to the Corinthians—'I seek not yours but you, . . . and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.' How could this expression of love be heightened? and yet his words were not more free than his deeds; as all his history shows.

Timothy was a son of like mind—a fellow-laborer who sought not his own but the things which be Jesus Christ's. From Paul's letters to Timothy we should judge that he took particular pains to educate him free from covetousness. He educated him to 'endure hardness,' and not entangle himself with the affairs of this life—to give attention to reading, exhortation and doctrine, and flee the love of money. Timothy profited by this course, and was a special help to Paul undoubtedly, in withstanding the Judas spirit, which desolated the church in the last days.

Paul's advice to the rich, is beautiful:—'Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.' 1 Tim. 6: 17, 18, 19. It cor-

responds to Christ's saying 'make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.' His advice to the poor is equally beautiful. 'Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.' Heb. 13: 5, 6.

Paul was not only liberal in money, but liberal in good works; and to his other son, Titus, he sends particular exhortations on this point—that he should be a pattern of good works to the luxurious Cretans, and instruct his church to 'maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.' II.

Habits for Students.

The following "Rules for the Formation of Habits," we find in a late educational work:

1. Have a plan laid beforehand, for every day.
2. Acquire a habit of untiring industry.
3. Cultivate perseverance.
4. Cultivate a habit of punctuality.
5. Be an early riser.
6. Be in the habit of learning something from every man with whom you meet.
7. Form fixed principles on which to think and act.
8. Be simple and neat in your personal habits.
9. Acquire the habit of doing every thing well.
10. Make constant effort to master your temper.
11. Cultivate soundness of judgment.
12. Observe a proper treatment of parents, friends, and companions.—*Todd's Students' Manual.*

These rules vividly remind us of Dr. Franklin's money maxims. The peculiar characteristic of both is *entire absence of reference to God*. Here we are told to 'observe a proper treatment of friends,' &c.; but not a thought is suggested about Jesus Christ, who is the best friend of education, and every true interest. Here, also, we are told to 'make constant efforts to master the temper;' but nothing said about getting a new 'temper,' based on 'peace, joy, and comfort in the Holy Ghost.'

Education is one of the most important interests of life: indeed, properly considered, it is the only business of life, and consists in the perfect development of every faculty of our being. It is therefore of the highest importance that it be conducted upon right principles. The object of education fills our souls; in it we behold our destinies; but we never could hope to work them out under such rules as given above. However, we are not left guideless on this subject. And if we conceive of education merely as the *attainment of knowledge*, (which is the common limitation of the word,) the best 'rules' for that attainment may be found in the Bible.

Solomon, who is certainly good authority on this subject, says, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.*" This, then, is the first 'habit' to be formed. Here is a sure foundation to build upon. If persons build upon any other foundation, though they may become 'infinitely wise in their own conceit,' their wisdom is but foolishness. This habit will lead the student into communication with the source of all wisdom. 'In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' It is 'penny-wise and pound-foolish' to seek only the knowledge that may be derived from books, &c., neglecting the great fountain to which we can always have access through faith. 'Shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, but drinking deeply, sobers us again.' The fountain in Christ is the only place where we can 'drink deep.'

This saying of Christ, for aught we see to the contrary, is as applicable to the student as to the merchant: "Take no thought for the morrow; . . . Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." However opposite this may seem from scholastic prudence, we are confident it is the true basis of education: 'habits of industry' may be good in themselves, but they are only secondary to this leading principle. Faith and trust in God are far preferable in the school of wisdom to 'habits of early rising,' 'perseverance,' &c. 'Taking no

thought for the morrow' is not very consonant with 'having a plan laid beforehand for every day,' but we cannot help it: 'sufficient unto the day is the evil [and the good] thereof.'

In conclusion, we would propose as substitutes for Mr. Todd's twelve rules the following:—

1. Seek from God daily food for the heart and mind.
2. Acquire a habit of untiring attention to the truth.
3. Cultivate faith.
4. Cultivate faithfulness.
5. Confess Christ in thine heart 'when thou sittest in the house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.'
6. Cultivate a purpose to 'know all things.'
7. Seek inspiration.
8. Think more of internals than externals.
9. Acquire the habit of doing everything 'heartily, as unto the Lord.'
10. 'Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man Christ Jesus.'
11. Cultivate charity.
12. 'Love God with all thy heart, mind, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.'

W. A. H.

The following very sensible article is from an English Journal. We copy it from the New York *Home Journal*. The fact that such free thought finds utterance in high places on both sides of the great water, indicates that 'the fashion of this world' is indeed yielding to the encroachments of common sense. The article has some special interest for us, because we hear in it a distant echo of our much abused First Annual Report and Bible Argument.

An Old Doctor's Opinion on Woman's Dress.

You ask me for my opinion on the subject of practical reform in the dress of women. As I have a habit of speaking out, you shall hear it roundly, and at once. I here premise that I utterly disclaim any admiration of the exaggerated and ridiculous caricatures exhibited on the stage and in our shop windows, under the title of 'Bloomer Costume'; such a theatrical style of attire is not to be desired, nor would it be imitated by sensible women; but a modified phase of the proposed reform may be very judiciously and becomingly substituted. I think that the sooner an alteration and improvement takes place in female attire, the better. I am perfectly aware that vulgar ridicule and conceited prejudice operate powerfully to prevent this being effected, but we have so many instances on record of beneficial discoveries and progressions being the marked objects of scorn and derision when first discussed, that a reflective mind will not be dismayed at the antagonism offered by impertinence or ignorance. I think woman's dress, as at present arranged, is liable to the objections of dirt, danger, discomfort, and most certainly, despite its 'Alexandrine length,' indelicacy. Woman has two legs as well as man, and it is essential to have them as closely and as separately clothed to insure from cold and undue exposure. I have seen accidents, when a woman might have escaped without serious hurt, had not her instinctive attention been given to replacing her deranged outer garments—she knew she was insecurely covered below, and her anxiety to prevent further exposure was the direct cause of mutilation of body, and often loss of existence. Had she been accustomed to be well clad in some sound material, she would have been less fastidious about showing a leg for a few minutes, and the preservation of limb and life greatly facilitated thereby. I have lately had two female patients, who fell, while going up stairs, in consequence of their skirts being too long to admit the possibility of ascending without raising these ridiculous petticoats with one hand. One lady, unfortunately, had her first-born in her arms; the child received a severe concussion of the brain, and the mother dislocated her wrist.

I have been called to attend many with rheumatic affections of the limbs, and internal diseases of the lower organs, when, on inquiry, I have found the patients either entirely without close-fitting habiliments, or wearing those of a flimsy and useless quality, affording no protection whatever against draught or damp. Now, if one of the two sexes must needs go about the world in such an unguarded state of body, I really think we men are most competent to incur the risk attending it, for the higher and more nervous organization of women renders it doubly incumbent on them to be uniformly and carefully wrapped about the extremities.

In making good my charge of 'dirt,' the world will admit the visible evidence afforded by trailing skirts every dusty or rainy day. I am a tolerable philosopher, and not easily disturbed by trifles, but when I see expensive silks and satins go about doing the work of crossing-sweepers' brooms—when I see several inches of rich dresses trailing through the heterogeneous offensive gatherings of city streets—when I see shoes and stockings one mass of mud—when I walk in a choking cloud of dust raised by the fair beings around me—really my equanimity gets slightly irritated, and I am inclined to apply a pair of scissors to the 'part affected,' and here I can say something of the indelicacy advanced. Women who have a natural respect for common cleanliness, as naturally endeavor to preserve their skirts from contamination, and frequently on a rainy day I have beheld ladies holding their dresses so high, that a most unseemly display was the consequence. Poor things! they were perfectly innocent of the same display, and only exercising a womanly desire to keep 'tidy'; but I vow I have witnessed indelicate exhibitions, from attempts to keep long petticoats out of the mud, that offended good taste and refined feeling more than any reasonable adoption touching Turkish trousers could have done. I have seen women get out of an omnibus on black, sloppy days, when one of two results it was impossible to avoid—either the drapery must serve as a mop to the steps, or there must be a very uncertain degree of personal exposure; in the first case, there is the spoilation of a good dress and great annoyance to the wearer; in the latter, the unavoidable 'indelicate' is a subject

of grinning delight to any empty-headed 'gent' that may be passing. It is my opinion that a woman's walking-robe should be independent of drenched flag-stones and filthy puddles. She ought to be able to walk without devoting her sole attention to the bottom of her dress. She ought to be educated with less of false delicacy than to entertain the notion that the supposed possession of locomotive power above the ankle is 'shocking' and 'improper.'—Heaven forbid that I should in the remotest manner, wish to neutralize the exquisite and charming constituents of woman's real modesty. I have seen too much of the holy worth and moral strength attached to woman's conduct, to be able to do otherwise than worship and respect the innate principles which prompt such exemplification. I am no raving enthusiast, seeking to place man and woman in false positions, but I am mentally convinced that woman might be invested with a freer and safer style of attire, without being disqualified for any of her important relations, either as mother, wife, daughter, sister, or citizen.

Now for the 'discomfort.' Perhaps this would be best understood by adopting the practical advice of an American lady to a young gentleman who considered his brains and whiskers competent to rule the solar system. "Just try long petticoats yourself in muddy weather, and see how you like them." We have little doubt that an hour's experience in the dabbling, dirty, trailing garments would lessen the wonder that sensible women should seek some style more pleasant for 'getting about' in. Fancy the bliss of walking with dragging, heavy, mud-soaked petticoats flapping against the ankles at every step! Consider how pleasant it is to have the feet thoroughly dredged with dry, foul dust on a hot dog day! Imagine the freedom of running up stairs to the third floor, with a candlestick in one hand and some domestic luggage in the other! There is a constriction of limb and action that makes the journey more difficult than a round or two on the treadmill; and then in the mazy dance, what total impossibility of activity or healthy freedom do long petticoats cause, when every partner is likely to step on the hem and produce unlimited rents; what yards of damaged gossamer, and what myriads of 'undone gathers' I have observed and pitied! Indeed, I am acquainted with a family of three young ladies who regularly take needle and thread to evening parties, for the express purpose of 'sewing each other up.' Just cast your eye round a room during the last 'gallop,' and the chances are that you will behold sufficient tattered and pinned-up flounces to suggest the notion of a genteel game at romps in flag fair.

I also believe that long petticoats afford a disgraceful concealment to the feet of slovenly, lazy women, and did we dare to inspect the state in which many keep their 'propelling members,' we should find trodden-down, slipshod, ragged shoes, and untrimmed, dirty hose to a disreputable extent; and this condition of the feet, and a yawning, half-undone row of 'hooks and eyes' down the back, are points of personal neglect which always mark a slatternly and not too really delicate woman. Men in daily life are invariably neater and better equipped about the feet than women; but if women's garments were short enough to be entirely out of the mud and dust, and yet of a perfectly modest length, ladies would soon be as particular about their shoes and boots as they are now about their collars and cuffs.

During my visits to the Great Exhibition, I had multitudinous opportunities of witnessing the absurd extent to which the 'fashion' of 'long petticoats' has been carried. I accidentally trod on the frail muslin of a young lady, and the consequence was a rent some half-yard in length. I apologized, but the girl, with frank sense, replied, 'Don't name it sir; ladies wear their dresses so long, that it is impossible to avoid treading on them.' A little further on, I observed the skirt of a lady in literal *rags* at the bottom—the lining had been pulled and torn into small fragments, and fell beneath the silk in dirty shreds, affording a subject for laughter and contempt to all around, until the gentleman with her begged her to step aside and pin it up, if possible. I happened to be leaving one day when it rained heavily, and the distress of the well-dressed women was pitiable. The bottoms of their dresses seemed the great focus of anxiety; and no wonder. The turning of skirts over shoulders, the tucking-up in all manner of mysterious arrangements, and the general venting of disgust at the abomination of long petticoats, assured me that women have a very keen and impatient sense of the inconvenience inflicted by them; and really the odd and not very decorous display of undergarments and limbs would have been well obliterated by a more rational style of walking attire. And let us here say a word on the extravagant outlay incurred by this willful destruction of material.

I have ventured to remonstrate with my daughters sometimes, when they requested a sum of money for 'new dresses,' and observed that the dresses they were condemning seemed very presentable. "Oh, yes!" was the reply, 'they are very good, excepting round the bottom, and they are not fit to be seen there;' and sure enough they convinced me of the fact, by exhibiting a collection of soiled and unseemly skirts that offended my vision most sensibly, and a twenty pound note left my pocket while I poured somewhat fierce anathemas on 'long petticoats.' I am as proud of seeing my wife and daughters well dressed as any man, but I decidedly object to giving half a guinea a yard for silk to sweep the streets with.

Thus, we see that 'long petticoats' are alike objectionable either in the promenade or polka, and ought to be discarded by rational women as one of those excrescences of Fashion which so often disfigure what nature made perfect and beautiful. I firmly believe that these ridiculously long petticoats were first employed by some high-born child of physical misfortune, who had swollen legs or deformed feet transmitted with the same blood that claimed a coronet, and thus were primitively worn on the same principle as the stiff, high, abominable stocks exhibited by men some half century since were—that of hiding an offensive ugliness; but why the well-turned ankles and neat feet of the majority of women should be shrouded in dirty, trolloping drapery, and why the want of healthy liberty of action and personal comfort should be thrust on the whole sex on such a score, only the obstinate and silly prejudice of Fashion can explain.

And now to a frightful source of evil—the tight, small waist, so much admired by those who dream not of the mortal consequences attending. A mass of suffering and disease is attributable to this compression of the viscera which is truly deplorable. Few out of the pale of physiological research and evidence, have a notion of what 'small waists' originate; the fashion is as unnatural as unartistic, and a painter or sculptor would turn with pity or contempt from the young lady whose waist can be almost spanned. How can digestion and circulation go on, with the ribs compressed into such a wasp-like circumference as we are daily forced to look on? How can the spine retain its beautiful upright figure, so warped and ill-treated as it is? Can we believe that God did his work so badly in the fairest and most exquisite work of His creation, that buckram and steel are needed to prop up 'the house of life'? Did he mould the best of his creatures so carelessly, that pinching in here and swelling out there are essential to render the 'plastic, breathing image' fit to enter a drawing-room? What insolent presumption is in the hand that seeks to *improve* the upright beauty of the human being? And does not the short-sighted mortal think that Nature will not have her revenge for the insult thrust upon her? Does the woman imagine that the arteries, veins, stomach, lungs, and heart, will do their proper duties under such a grasping vice of artificial constraint?—Does she think her progeny will be strong and healthy, as if born of an untrammelled mother? Surely, there is need of reform in this error most preposterously; for if the real amount of injury inflicted on the human system by means of stays, were exposed to the blind victim's eyes, a woman would turn from 'corsets' as from a boa constrictor. I have three girls in my family, but not one of them has ever been incarcerated in 'stays.' A substantial sort of close-fitting vest is all I ever permitted them to wear; and I am happy to say, that finer forms, or better constitutions, cannot be produced; their spines are as straight as those of my boys, and had I a score of girls to bring up, I would teach them to look on steel, whalebone and buckram as so many means of suicide.

There is another condition of female dress which deserves unmitigated censure; I mean the mysterious heap of either feathers, flannel, horse-hair, or wool, which goes by the generic name of 'bustle.' I have followed ladies who sported such an extreme redundancy in this department, that it at once appeared laughably unnatural and grossly indelicate. Oh, what a pity it is that woman is not able to appreciate the natural and exquisite beauty of her form! How it is to be regretted, not only in a physical, but in an artistic sense, that she pinches in here and piles up there, regardless of the power and design of the Creator! Why will she insist on screwing in the ribs, and thereby ruining one of the greatest beauties of the human form?—a flat straight back. All grace is utterly negated by the round, hunched-up shoulders, which too often mark the female figure, and which are almost invariably the result of undue pressure on the spinal muscles. I saw a young woman on horseback at Brighton, a few days since, whose waist was a "mere nothing;" I looked at her with pity, for not only was she miserably sickly-looking, but her whole figure was angular and ugly to a painful degree, and not a "line of beauty" presented itself to the eye, despite her very taper waist. And now, taking all things into consideration, do you not think, my dear friend, that woman's dress might be improved? There is not the slightest occasion for women to be dressed like men; but I contend that flowing skirts of *reasonable* length, with trousers, full or otherwise, to the ankle, would be infinitely superior, in every way, to the nasty, uncomfortable, dirty 'long petticoats,' now in vogue, most strenuously observing, at the same time, that the *body* be habited *loosely and freely*, and I am convinced this reform would afford exhibitions of elegance far beyond any thing the present system can show.

Cable-Talk, by J. H. N.—No. 11.

January 12, 1852.

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5: 17.)—The next passage tells us *how* 'all things are become new': viz., 'all things are of God.' The unregenerated man sees things growing as the result merely of natural laws. But the spiritual man—the new man in Christ Jesus—sees all things centrally, not simply with his natural perception, but with his interior understanding: he perceives God as the center of creation, around which all things cluster. All the processes which we trace out with the natural understanding, are but external manifestations—the superficial show of things: the realities are in God, and emanate from him.—God is not only the past Creator of all things, but a present Creator—he is constantly creating new things. Every thing that grows, and all that is produced by the multitude of agencies at work in the world, are but so many developments of his life: even the food we eat is filled with the life of God. When we see things in this central way, with hearts of faith, understanding that God is the present Creator and upholder of all things, we can receive things in a truthful way. The food we receive will be poisonous to our life, and tend to make us animals, if we conceive of it simply as the fruit of the ground.

—The *usefulness* of life consists in its return to God. When life that has emanated from God, and united itself to matter, returns to its source, it attains its end. Life is sent forth into creation to bless and glorify God.—If it stops in its circuit, or turns outward from God, it fails to fulfill its function. But if our life turns back to God in faith and love, laden with gratitude and thankfulness for his gifts, we forward his purpose, and complete the circuit—send life back to its source.

—Eating and drinking, when properly conducted, is a *sacrifice* to God. We may conceive of life as a tree, growing out of God, of which we are branches. The life of the tree is a unit, and, of course, whatever nourishes the branches, benefits the great tree of life, and is a sacrifice to God. If we eat with the consciousness that our life is received from God, and that all its processes are connected with the divine life, our life, as Paul says, 'increaseth with the increase of God.' Then our food is a sacrifice to God—an incense offering—ministering growth and nourishment to his great temple.

[The series of "HOME-TALKS" (continued in this paper from the Onida Circular,) will be understood to be off-hand conversational lectures, spoken at our evening fireside, and phonographically reported by Wm. A. Hinde.]

Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 91.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR, MARCH 19, 1851.]

PURPOSE A MEASURE OF CHARACTER.

I think that the distinction between characters as to force, elevation of aim, and worth, lies in the difference of their *purpose*. I am not speaking now of moral value, but of force, dignity, power,—difference in motive quantity. And here we must make a distinction between two sorts of action; between what is properly called *volition*—will, that produces immediate action, as when a man strikes a blow with a hammer—and *purpose*, which does not necessarily produce immediate action, but is the continued source of action—the cause of a great many specific wills. We can illustrate the difference between the two forces—direct simple volition, and continuous purpose—by examples in the physical world. The falling of a stone, the blow of a hammer, or any other such direct action, may be considered as representing the simple force of volition or will. But a coiled-up spring is like a purpose. A spring coiled up in a watch has no perceptible motion in itself, but it keeps the wheels of the watch going, and in rapid motion, for twenty-four hours' time. I should call that spring a fair representation of purpose in a man; and the motion of the balance wheel represents what we call specific volition. The spring in that clock

keeps it ticking in the way that you observe, for ten days together. You see in the pendulum a specific motion; but the purpose that keeps it going is back in the coil of the spring. That seldom has to be meddled with. It is the same continuous force from day to day, for a considerable length of time.

With this idea of the difference between volition and purpose—understanding that one is the spring and source of the other, and is related to it as the spring of a clock stands related to the motion of the pendulum—I do not know as the brutes have any purpose. They have passions and appetites; and, as these passions are excited, they put forth specific wills; but I do not see in them any considerable evidence of purpose—a coiled-up spring producing a continuous and consistent aim at a general object.

Then, as we come up to the higher order of beings, I see that men are divided into two classes. There is a lower class of men, who have no purpose in life, but are to a great extent like the brutes—moved by circumstances—the whole action of their life is in specific will; they do what circumstances and surrounding influences compel them to do as they go along. Society, and the forces of nature, are all the time touching them, and they move under the impulse of these forces. The movement of their life is not the result of an inward spring, a principle, but is the momentary action produced by appetites, passions and external influences.

Above them is a class of men who do form a purpose in life, and carry it out. These are altogether superior to the first class, and get the advantage of them. They are the ones that make money, and carry out all the great enterprises of the day; and they use the other class as tools. The distinction between a great man and a small one—between the poor and the rich, as a general thing—between the successful and the unsuccessful, is just there; one has a *purpose* in life, and the other has none. There are all shades of strength and wisdom in the purposes of men; but it is a great thing to have a purpose, that rises from the animal to what may properly be called the *human*. I think that man's capability of forming a purpose is his distinction from the brutes, just as much as his capability of speech is.

But we are on the track to discover character of a still higher class than what we call successful men in the world. And we may be very sure, from the course of thought we have taken, that the higher grade must be character that has carried the civilization of purpose-forming to a still higher pitch, than the world has. The distinction between Christ and the men of this world, as to power and dignity of character—saying nothing of moral differences—is seen by a comparison of purposes. He had a more absolute, far-reaching, all-controlling purpose than other men. While other men have a purpose like a watch spring, that is weak, and can be stopped by a feather or a grain of dust, and that acts for only twenty four hours, he had in the place of that a spring, like the one in this clock, that will run for ten days, with a motion that you can hear all over the room. The difference in the size and temper of the coil of steel in the two cases, is like the difference between him and other men. Study his character, and you find from beginning to end that all his motions were governed by the purpose in him. His purpose was to do the will of his Father; that purpose carried the whole machinery from first to last with strength enough to force its way through all other influences and obstructions, and to accomplish its end perfectly.

Here we may introduce another distinction. We compared Christ's purpose to the spring of a clock, to begin with; but now, we will introduce another comparison, that will place his character, and all that takes form from him, on a positively higher grade. The nature of a watch spring is such, that though it will run twenty four hours, or even ten days, yet it exhausts itself at last. It uncoils to the extent of its elasticity, if nothing obstructs it, and then it stops till it is wound up again. We must

find, in order to illustrate truthfully Christ's purpose, a spring that brings this same elastic force to bear continuously—that does not have to be wound up every little while, and so is a superior force. We have in *steam* precisely that superior force: that is to say, assuming that fire and water are provided, there is a perpetual, steady force of steam for any length of time. And if you consider a moment, you will see that the nature and force of steam is the same as that of the watch spring—it is the force of elasticity in the water uncoiling itself. Water is of such a character, that by introducing heat into it, it proves to be a spring coiled up. When heat is introduced it begins to uncoil itself, acting like a spring. Its nature is such that we can introduce heat to it through the sides of the vessel containing it, and so uncoil the spring in a continuous way and bring its action to bear.

This is a very good illustration of the nature of the elasticity in Christ. While ordinary men have a purpose like a watch spring, that has a certain amount of elastic force, but which necessarily exhausts itself, and if kept in continuous action must be wound up from time to time, Christ's purpose is like the force of steam—constantly kept in action by caloric introduced from the Father. With him, the machinery was all arranged, the force was started, and the communication from the Father to his heart, generating elasticity, was constantly open. The result was a steady force, like that of steam, which is all the time generating in the combination of water and heat. He did not have to be wound up—did not get a start, and then drop down and have to be criticised, and labored with, and brought to the starting point again. The generating agency was continually entering him. All that was necessary to insure a continuous force, and the intensest force, in his character, was the maintenance of his communication with the Father. This grade of character I consider far superior to any that is formed in the world. Its purpose is generated and maintained by influx. Brutes, and the lowest class of men, have no purpose, but are moved by passing influences. The more elevated sort of men have a purpose, but it is weak in its nature, and limited in its action; they have to be wound up. But a man of God, like Christ or Paul, and, in fact, all believers who have apprehended that which they are apprehended for, have a purpose that is inexhaustible and unchanging, maintained by spiritual influx, by their communication with God himself.

This view coincides pretty well with the view we took of the difference between a man of this world and a man of God, as illustrated by the *curve* and the *straight line*.—[See Free Church Circular, p. 108, "Spiritual Geometry."]—A man whose character is proceeding on the polygon principle, from impulse to impulse, is at work by a *spring*, and his spring has to be wound up from time to time: his purpose, like a spring, exhausts itself; and he has to be put through a course of criticism, which winds him up, and sends him on again. But a man whose course is in a true curve is under a force like that of steam: his purpose is generated by influx. We say the true curve in character and action is produced by the constant combination of two influences—human will and inspiration. So steam is produced by the constant combination of fire and water. The providing of steam power in the world is quite expensive; but in spiritual dynamics it is the most economical and convenient method of action. Our own spirits are the water, and God is the fire; it costs nothing for fuel, and steam is generated constantly.

This superior kind of purpose—the motive force that was in Christ, in Paul, and in the Primitive church—is reproduced at all times by the power that raised Jesus from the dead. It is *almighty*. Place it in any circumstances, no matter where, or what obstructions and temptations may oppose—no matter how long it has to wait for success—it will go right on uncoiling itself—getting control of surrounding things, and forcing its way to its object by a law

as inevitable as that by which steam expands. Though it is not explosive like powder, but works in a gentle manner like steam; yet like steam, it is almighty, and if it cannot have vent, like that, it will explode worse than powder. Steam rises in a gentle quiet manner, and is very manageable, if the machinery is rightly contrived and managed, so that it has vent; but shut the boiler up, and continue your fire, and you will have an explosion worse than any of gunpowder.

There is one apparent advantage that a spring power has over steam. A spring may be coiled up again—but if you remove the fire from steam it loses all its character and force. I think that is true of those who have known the force of truth. If they lose their connection with it, they flat out worse than any other class. The difference between steam and the water that it cools into, is about the difference between the state of a man when under God's Spirit, and his condition when he has lost his simplicity, and dropped down into a worldly spirit. He has then lost his purpose, and has no ambition—no force.

This discourse will enable us to define what we mean by *earnestness*—being in earnest. A man who has not been put under the force of God's purpose—a force generated by the divine, eternal will—does not know anything about being in earnest—he cannot know. There are all degrees in purpose—from the weak and vacillating purpose of infants, up to the almighty will of God; and you may speak of all degrees of earnestness; one man is *relatively* more earnest than another, because he has more purpose; but earnestness in the absolute sense, is nothing less than a purpose generated and maintained by the eternal will, that is omnipotent—proof against all temptations and obstructions.

A Parable for Children.

There was once a king who had a beautiful garden which he valued very much. One morning, on visiting it, he found that every thing seemed to be wilting and dying. He approached a venerable and magnificent tree and said, "My noble Oak, what aileth thee?" to which the Oak answered in a desponding tone, "I am a great, rough, sprawling thing; I bear no fruit; I have no fragrance, or beauty; I take up a great deal of room, and keep the sun from the grass and the flowers, so that they cannot grow; it is better for me to be out of the way." The king passed on to his favorite rose, which was drooping and fading, and said, "My pretty Rose, what aileth thee?" and the Rose said—"I am of no use, my flowers come to nothing; if I were only like the fruitful vine I would be content;" But he found the vine all trailing in the dust, and when he said, "My beautiful Vine, what aileth thee?" it made a similar complaint—"I am a poor, feeble thing, I cannot even hold myself up, but must depend on others for my support; if I were only yonder giant Oak, affording shade and shelter to others, or even this beautiful Rose, giving pleasure to all who behold it, I should not be discouraged." Again the king passed on, and lo, a bright little eye looked up to welcome him. "Why my dear little Heart's-ease, what makes you look so bright and smiling?" "O, I thought it would please you to have me cheerful and contented. I suppose if you had wanted me to be an Oak, you would have planted an acorn; or if you had wanted me to be a Rose or a Vine, you would have planted me such; but as you planted me a Heart's-ease, I thought that was what you wanted of me, and I would try and be the best little Heart's-ease that ever I could."

We should learn to be contented in discontent. At the same time that we are dissatisfied with our present attainments in wisdom and spiritual life, we may rejoice in our present experience—in the present manifestation of the will of God to us—knowing that 'all things are of God,' and that 'all things work for good to those that love God.' This is a very marked characteristic of Paul's life. While, on the one hand, he was full of present thankfulness and gratitude, on the other, he was always looking forward to future attainments:—"Not as though I had already attained, (says he,) either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high call of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3: 12-14.

Letters Received.

A. Coleman; S. Bailey; F. Long; J. E. Howard; S. Field; L. G. Richmond; E. Y. Joslen.